

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14 and 16-22 are presently active in this case. The foregoing amendment amends Claims 1, 11, 13, and 22 and cancels Claim 15 without prejudice. Support for the amendment to Claims 1 and 22 can be found in Fig. 1 and original Claim 15, for example, and the amendments to Claims 11 and 13 are to correct minor informalities. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 16-21 were indicated as allowable and Claim 15 was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that Claims 16-21 are allowable.

At the outset, Applicants note with appreciation the courtesy of a personal interview extended by Primary Examiner Sophia Chen to Applicants' representatives. The personal interview was conducted on December 6, 2004. During the interview an amendment to Claim 1 was discussed, which was agreed to address the outstanding rejections, and the presently submitted amendments set forth the discussed amendment to Claim 1.

In the outstanding Office Action, the title of the invention was objected to as not being descriptive. The title has been amended to be, "Image Forming Apparatus and Image Forming System For Forming an Image on Two Sides of A Recording Medium." Accordingly, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the objection to the title.

The specification and drawings were objected to for minor informalities. Claim 10 is amended by the present response to address the objections to the drawings. Accordingly, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the objection to the drawings.

Claims 11 and 13 were objected to for minor informalities. Claims 11 and 13 are amended to correct the minor informalities. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3, 5-7, 10-15, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Omata et al. (U.S. Pat. Pub. No. US 2002/0090236, hereafter "Omata '236") in view of Nagamine et al. (US Pat. Pub. No. US 2002/00011476, hereafter "Nagamine"); Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Omata '236 in view of Nagamine and further in view of *In re Aller*, 220 F.2d 454, 456, 105, USPQ 233, 235 (CCPA 1955) and *In re Peterson*, 315 F.3d at 1330, 65 USPQ2d at 1382; Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Omata '236 in view of Nagamine and further in view of Ohkama et al. (Us Pat. No. 6,108,500, hereafter Ohkama); Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Omata '236 in view of Nagamine and further in view of Omata et al. (US Pat. Pub. No. US 2002/0122679, hereafter Omata '679).

The Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments set forth herein overcome the obviousness rejections.

Regarding the rejections of independent Claims 1 and 22, as agreed in the personal interview, Omata '236 and Nagamine do not disclose, "a conveying unit that directly conveys the recording medium, to which the image has been transferred by the second image carrier, ***substantially vertically*** from the second image carrier to a fixing unit" (emphasis added). In contrast, Omata '236 and Nagamine both describe conveying units which transfer recording media horizontally to a fixing unit. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claims 1 and 22 are in condition for allowance.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 2-14, Ohkama and Omata '679 are cited to provide features of dependent claims and do not remedy the deficiencies of Omata '236 and Nagamine. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2-14 are patentably distinguished over the cited references for at least the same reasons as amended Claims 1 and 14.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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